

Local Goods Auction

Support San Juan County farmers and farm programs at the online Local Goods Auction benefitting the San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild. Island made Art, Food, Farm Experiences and more from over 50 donors are featured in the auction with weekly special music, children's video, and storytelling features. Support the Ag Guild and unique island made products created on the San Juans. Preview October 3-9 with Live Auction Oct 10-31. www.sjiagguild.com.

Local Goods Auctions Raising Funds for Farm Programs

San Juan County has discovered a community super power and is applying it to strengthen access to locally grown farm fresh foods. Springing to action early in the pandemic, the San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild focused on a fundraising partnership to bolster the FARM Fund that harnesses financial donations in an innovative grant making venture that targets small farm infrastructure needs, from irrigation to greenhouse, in an active push to increase local food production and distribution. To receive a grant, local farms agreed to up their sales and donations to local food banks to help feed the county's most vulnerable, and ensure food security for all. \$117,000 has been raised and granted to date and the Ag Guild welcomes ongoing donations to support the FARM Fund.

During October, the Ag Guild is hosting the Local Goods Auction that features Art, Food and Farm Experiences from over 50 donors as a fundraiser to continue support for solutions oriented food security programs in San Juan County. Lend a hand and celebrate the flavors of the San Juans at the Auction, October 10-31. Auction preview Oct 3-9. Each week special auction items are featured along with island music and childrens and farm videos. See www.sjiagguild.com

San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild Auction and the FARM Fund

We are standing at a point of unprecedented possibility in the development of a resilient food system in the San Juan Islands. The pandemic has exposed weaknesses in the supply chains that we've always taken for granted, from runs

on staples like flour to the massive waste of animal life as commercial meat production was brought to a halt across the U.S. “Here in the San Juans,” notes Sarah Pope, Board Chair of the San Juan Island Agricultural Guild, “the pandemic has also revealed our community’s super power to protect and support our vulnerable neighbors, quickly devise new collaborative ways to grow and deliver food, and take the leap to create an inter-island market in which producers can prosper and more islanders than ever can access delicious local food.”

Several effective food production and food distribution initiatives fostered by the San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild (known locally as the Ag Guild) have been pivotal in increasing food security and responding to the stressors of the pandemic. One successful example of food system solutions on the production side is the FARM Fund, managed by the Ag Guild. The FARM Fund is a grant-making fund started by the Orcas Food Coop. In January moved to Ag Guild management and became a multi-island opportunity for investing locally-raised support directly in critical farm infrastructure.

During the first seven months of the pandemic, through collaboration with the Orcas Community Foundation and the Food Coop, the FARM Fund has distributed \$117,000 in competitive grant awards to support local farm infrastructure improvements, from irrigation to greenhouses. The award caveat is that grantee food producers agree to increase the quantity of island grown produce available to food bank participants. As the severity of the pandemic became visible, this direct grant to farmers helped local communities respond in the face of the doubling demand for food bank services that skyrocketed due to COVID-driven job losses.

The Ag Guild invites the community to expand support of the FARM Fund. During October the Ag Guild is hosting an Island Goods online auction fundraiser featuring island made foods, art, music, farm experiences and more. Auction proceeds support Ag Guild programs such as the FARM Fund. To lend your support to the Ag Guild, go to sjiagguild.com to make a direct donation to the FARM Fund and join in the auction Oct 10-31. Auction preview is Oct 3-9. Special music guests, childrens’ performers, poetry, storytellers and more will be featured throughout October as part of the festivities. Show your support for agriculture innovations and help strengthen San Juan County small farms.